



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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November 18, 2009

NEWS RELEASE

Lamunda Nichols, owner of Lamunda's Manor, a personal care home, was charged today by Information<sup>1</sup> in connection with her theft of approximately \$50,471.94 in federal benefits checks intended for persons with severe mental and physical disabilities, announced United States Attorney Michael L. Levy. According to the information, Social Security Administration approved Nichols to be a representative payee – an individual authorized to manage a beneficiary's funds to ensure that their basic human needs, including food, clothing and shelter, are met. Representative payees occupy important positions of trust, for they are obligated by law to ensure that federal funds intended for vulnerable Americans with severe mental and physical disabilities are properly spent for their care and benefit.

The Information charges that Nichols continued to operate a personal care home at 912-922 E. Locust Avenue in Germantown even after the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare revoked her license to operate and ordered her to shut down. According to the information, defendant Nichols: failed to notify the Social Security Administration that persons previously in her care had moved to other locations and were no longer in her care; and failed to keep any records of the use and disposition of funds she had received on behalf of the individuals in her care. The Information charges Nichols with converting more than \$50,000 worth of federal benefits checks, intended for beneficiaries no longer in her care, to her own use. In some case she forged the beneficiaries' signatures on the checks. As a result, the Information charges that these individuals received no funds at all for their care during the time that Nichols converted their benefits checks for her own personal use.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANT

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR DATE OF BIRTH
Lamunda Nichols	Philadelphia, PA	52

If convicted the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of ten years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and three years supervised release.

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<sup>1</sup> An Indictment or Information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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The case was investigated by the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General and is being prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Theresa A. Casey.

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